TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSWOMAN CARRIE MEEK

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with the pinnacle of respect that I rise today to pay tribute to retired Congresswoman Carrie Meek.

For the past 10 years, I have had the distinct honor and privilege to not only know Carrie, but to serve in this great body with her, all the while being the gracious beneficiary of her wealth of spirit and depth of character.

Only in America can the granddaughter of a slave and the daughter of a former sharecropper believe that she can achieve and conquer all that presents itself in opposition to her dreams.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated in one of his fireside chats, ''The true test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.'' Carrie is the embodiment of that quote.

She has fought with relentless effort for the people of the 17th Congressional District of Florida and has served them and her country well.

Carrie Meek has set the stage and perpetuated the legacy of political astuteness for all of us, but particularly for African-American women everywhere.

Carrie is truly a political pioneer and I and this legislative body have been, without a doubt, made the better for having just been in her element.

HUMAN CLONING PROHIBITION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union has under consideration the bill (H.R. 534) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit human cloning:

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to speak on behalf of the Greenwood Amendment H.R. 534. This has to do with research to help save human lives. It's not a question of human cloning. The process we're talking about—therapeutic cloning—takes embryos, many of which are fertilized in a laboratory petri dish. They are saved. The cells are separated so they can continue to grow. We learn about a mechanism to better understand tissues in the body. There will be an ability to cure diseases such as Parkinson's, Diabetes, Heart Muscle Disease, Chronic Liver Disease—the list is endless.

So please don't stop this exciting area of breakthrough new science. Don't confuse the issue with reproductive cloning. Hammers are used to build a building, but they can also be used as a lethal weapon. Because a hammer can be used as a murder weapon, we don't automatically outlaw it. Please support the Greenwood Amendment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INDIAN SCHOOL BUS ROUTE SAFETY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2003

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise to introduce companion legislation to a bill being introduced by Senator JEFF BINGAMAN in the Senate today. I am extremely pleased to be joined in introducing this legislation, the Indian School Bus Route Safety Reauthorization Act of 2003, by Congressman JIM MATHESON of Utah and Congressman RICK RENZI of Arizona, both of whom represent portions of the Navajo Nation in their Congressional districts.

This legislation is of great importance to our three states— specifically to the children and residents of the Navajo Nation, and the counties into which the Navajo Nation's boundaries extend. In New Mexico these counties are McKinley and San Juan Counties, and prior to 1998 they were responsible for maintaining the roads used by county school buses that stretch into the reservation to transport the children of the Navajo Nation to and from the county schools. Although there is nothing unique about counties funding and maintaining the roads in their jurisdiction, this particular case of the counties being responsible for the upkeep of the roads that ran into the Navajo Nation was extremely rare, and seems to be the only situation of this kind throughout the United States. This put an enormous burden on McKinley and San Juan County officials, and oftentimes resulted in impassable roads, which, in turn, resulted in children missing school because the buses were unable to pick them up.

In 1998, however, Senator Bingaman was successful in acquiring funds through the Indian School Bus Route Safety Act for the counties in New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona to assist them in facing this particularly burdensome responsibility. Today, we are proud to introduce the reauthorization of this legislation, which is set to expire very soon, to provide further assistance to the counties and children of the Navajo Nation. This bill authorizes funds totaling $24 million for Fiscal Years 2004 through 2009 to be split equally among New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona. The breakdown of the total amount of funding is $3 million each year for FY2004 and 2005, $4 million each year for FY2006 and 2007, and $5 million each year for FY2008 and 2009.

These critical funds will provide much-needed assistance to the counties, and will help put an end to the shameful situation of children missing school simply because of impassable roads due to lack of maintenance. I am extremely hopeful that we can either pass this measure, or include it as part of the TEA–21 reauthorization bill and provide further assistance to the children of the Navajo Nation and our respective states. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

INTRODUCING A BILL TO MAKE LEAF TOBACCO AN ELIGIBLE COMMODITY FOR THE MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues from other tobacco producing states to introduce a bill to put an end to discrimination against tobacco farmers. For almost eight years, hard-working, God-fearing, taxpaying tobacco farmers have been denied access to the funds provided by the federal Market Access Program, commonly known as MAP.

Under MAP, agricultural industry trade associations, cooperatives, and state or regional trade groups each year are invited to submit proposals to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to conduct approved foreign market development projects for various U.S. agricultural, fishery and forestry products. Examples include consumer promotions, market research, technical assistance, and trade servicing. MAP funds have been used to promote a wide range of products from sunflower seeds to catfish and cotton to hops for use in making beer.

Since 1993 USDA has been prohibited from using MAP funds to promote tobacco leaf sales overseas. This is patently unfair, and it is time for this discrimination to end. The future of American agriculture is tied to international trade. Currently, 25% of farmers' gross income comes from exports. The futures of thousands of Tar Heel tobacco farm families depend on exports, and I am not going to stand by and watch other commodities benefit from federal funds to access these markets while tobacco farmers are left out in the cold.

It is high time that tobacco is treated like the legal product that it is, and this legislation is a step in the right direction. I call on President Bush, Secretary Veneman, and my colleagues to support this bill and give our struggling tobacco farm families an opportunity to not just survive, but thrive.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES RESEARCH ACT

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today a bill that is a critical component in our efforts to combat aquatic invasive species—the Aquatic Invasive Species Research Act. This legislation creates a comprehensive research program that supports federal, state and local efforts to prevent invasive species from ever entering our waterways, as well as detection, control and eradication efforts once they are here. It complements a bill introduced today by Mr. GILCHREST in the House and Mr. LEVIN in the Senate, to reauthorize the National Invasive Species Act. This legislation is a critical component in our battle against these harmful and extremely damaging pests.

In undertaking this effort, I have found that many people wonder—''What is an invasive

species? Why it is so crucial to keep them out of the United States?'' It is important that we understand these questions so that we can appreciate the scope of the threat that invasive species pose to our economy and environment.

The introduction of non-native species is not new to the United States. People have brought non-native plants and animals into the United States, both intentionally and unintentionally, for a variety of reasons, since the New World was discovered. Some examples include the introduction of nutria (which is a rodent similar to a muskrat) by trappers to bolster the domestic fur industry, and the introduction of the purple loosestrife plant to add rich color to gardens. Both nutria and purple loosestrife are now serious threats to wetlands. Non-native species may also be introduced unintentionally, such as through species hitching rides in ships, crates, planes, or soil coming into the United States. For example, zebra mussels, first discovered in Lake St. Clair near Detroit in the late 1980s, came into the Great Lakes through ballast water from ships.

Not all species brought into the country are harmful to local economies, people and/or the environment. In fact, most non-native species do not survive because the environment does not meet their biological needs. In many cases, however, the new species will find favorable conditions (such as a lack of natural enemies or an environment that fosters propagation) that allow it to survive and thrive in a new ecosystem.

Only a small fraction of these non-native species become an ''invasive species''—defined as a species that is both non-native to the ecosystem and whose introduction causes or may cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. However, this small fraction can cause enormous damage, both to our economy and our environment.

Estimating the total economic impact of invasive species is extremely difficult. No single organization accumulates such statistics comprehensively. However, researchers at Cornell University estimate that invasive species cost Americans $137 billion annually. This includes the cost of control, damage to property values, health costs and other factors. Just one species can cost government and private citizens billions of dollars. For example, zebra mussels have cost the various entities in the Great Lakes basin an estimated $3 billion during the past 10 years for cleaning water intake pipes, purchasing filtration equipment, etc.

Beyond economic impacts, invasive species cause ecological costs that are even more difficult to quantify. For example, sea lamprey control measures in the Great Lakes cost approximately $10 million to $15 million annually. However, we do not have a good measure of the cost of lost fisheries due to this invader, which was first discovered in the Great Lakes in the early 1900s. In fact, invasive species now are second only to habitat loss as threats to endangered species. Quantifying the loss due to extinction caused by these invasive species is nearly impossible.

Given the enormous economic and environmental impacts these invaders cause, two clear goals emerge: First, we need to focus more resources and energy into dealing with this problem at all levels of government; second, our best strategy for dealing with invasive species is to focus these resources to prevent them from ever entering the United States. Spending millions of dollars to prevent species introductions will save billions of dollars in control, eradication and restoration efforts once the species become established. In fact, one theme is central to both Mr. GILCHREST's bill and this legislation. It is an old adage, but one worth following—''An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.''

To successfully carry out this strategy, we need careful, concerted management of this problem underpinned by research at every step. For example, we know that we must do more to regulate the pathways by which these invaders enter the United States (ships, aquaculture, etc.), which is an important component of Mr. GILCHREST's legislation. However, research must inform us as to which of these pathways pose the greatest threat and which techniques used to manage each pathway are effective. This legislation would help develop this understanding through the ecological and pathway surveys conducted under this bill. In fact, research underlies every management decision aimed at detecting, preventing, controlling and eradicating invasive species; educating citizens and stakeholders; and ensuring that resources are optimally deployed to increase the effectiveness of government programs. These items are also reflected in the legislation, which I will now describe in more detail.

The bill is divided into six main parts. The first three parts outline an ecological and pathway research program, combining surveys and experimentation, to be established by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the United States Geological Survey. This program is focused on understanding what invasive species are present in our waterways, which pathways they use to enter our waterways, how they establish themselves once they are here and whether or not invasions are getting better or worse based on decisions to regulate pathways. In carrying out this program, the three principal agencies I mentioned previously will develop standardized protocols for carry out the ecological and pathway surveys that are called for under the legislation. In addition, they will coordinate their efforts to establish long-term surveys sites so we have strong baseline information. This program also includes an important grant program so that academic researchers and state agencies can carry out the surveys at diverse sites distributed geographically around the country. This will give federal, state and local managers a more holistic view of the rates and patterns of invasions of aquatic invasive species into the United States. Lastly, the principal agencies will coordinate their efforts and pull all of this information together and analyze it to help determine whether or not decisions to manage these pathways are effective. This will inform policymakers as to which pathways pose the greatest threat and whether or not they need to change the way these pathways are managed.

The fourth part of the bill contains several programs to develop, demonstrate and verify technologies to prevent, control and eradicate invasive species. The first component is an Environmental Protection Agency grant program focused on developing, demonstrating and verifying environmentally sound technologies to control and eradicate aquatic invasive species. This research program will give federal, state and local managers more tools to combat invasive species that are also environmentally sound. The second component is a program to develop dispersal barriers—administered by the Army Corps of Engineers—which have been a critical issue in the Chicago Sanitary Canal where Great Lakes managers have been desperately trying to keep the Asian Carp from entering Lake Michigan from the Mississippi River system. The third component is expansion both in terms of scope and funding of a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Fish and Wildlife Service program geared toward demonstrating technologies that prevent invasive species from being introduced by ships. This is the federal government's only program that is focused solely on helping develop viable technologies to treat ballast water. It has been woefully underfunded in the past and deserves more attention.

The fifth part of the bill focuses on setting up research to directly support the Coast Guard's efforts to set standards for the treatment of ships with respect to preventing them from introducing invasive species. Ships are a major pathway by which invasive species are unintentionally introduced; the ballast water discharged by ships is of particular concern. One of the key issues that has hampered efforts to deal with the threats that ships pose is the lack of standards for how ballast water must be treated when it is discharged. The Coast Guard has had a very difficult time developing these standards since the underlying law that support their efforts (the National Invasive Species Act) did not contain a research component to support their work. This legislation provides that missing piece.

Finally, the sixth and final part supports our ability to identify invaders once they arrive. Over the past couple of decades, the number of scientists working in systematics and taxonomy, expertise that is fundamental to identifying species, has decreased steadily. In order to address this problem, the legislation sets up a National Science Foundation program to give grants for academic research in systematics and taxonomy with the goal of maintaining U.S. expertise in these disciplines.

Taken together, both my legislation and Mr. GILCHREST's represent an important step forward in our efforts to prevent invasive species from ever crossing our borders and combat them once they are arrive. New invaders are arriving in the United States each day, bringing with them even more burden on taxpayers and the environment. We simply cannot afford to wait any longer to deal with this problem, and so I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

ESTABLISHING AN ANNUAL VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN McCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support for National Visiting Nurse Association Week. As a nurse